



September 19, 2019

The Honorable Lawrence J. Hogan
Governor
State House
100 State Circle
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Dear Governor Hogan,

As you know, I have attempted to meet with you on several occasions throughout this past year to discuss how we can work together to address the level of violent crime in Baltimore City. So you can imagine that I was completely stunned to learn from the media that you have instructed Attorney General Brian Frosh to take over the prosecution of suspects involved in certain violent crimes in our city. While I do not agree with the action you have taken, I'm encouraged that you are showing a sense of urgency in addressing the violent crime that has taken too many lives and destroyed too many families in our community.

Gun violence in Baltimore is one of our great city's most pressing public health issues. At the Baltimore State's Attorney Office, our highest priority is a safe and healthy community, and, for us, that means doing everything in our power to reduce shootings and homicides.

I welcome your interest in how we can work together as Marylanders to stop the cycle of gun violence. I also value partnerships with other agencies throughout the state, and in particular, I have enjoyed working on the Governor's Council on Gangs and Violent Criminal Networks and welcome Attorney General Frosh to the Council. For those of us who regularly attend those meetings, as I do, we know first-hand the value of collaboration, and especially the importance of working together - without vitriol or blame - to create a safer and more just Maryland.

Just yesterday, a collaboration between my office, the United States Attorney, the FBI, ATF, and the Baltimore Police Department led to the indictment of those who allegedly shot Sergeant Carrington, illustrating how partnering together can work well when each office brings to bear its resources and expertise. I am convinced that we will achieve better results by working together than by creating more silos and more bureaucracy that stifles communication and collaboration, especially among other agencies within our own state. Cross-agency collaboration, especially the kind where we are being transparent and tearing down information barriers as opposed to creating new ones, drives innovative solutions for tackling persistent and complex problems like gun violence.

In addition to expressing my support for deeper collaboration across agencies, I also want to be very clear that the prosecutors in my office are doing an excellent job.



People in my office live in Baltimore, and we love this city. When we talk about residents facing the fear and the devastation of gun violence, we are talking about us - our families, our neighbors, and ourselves. We don't need a primer on how important it is to prioritize gun violence. In fact, as an office, we'd deprioritized spending resources on things like marijuana possession, so that we can concentrate our efforts on the most serious offenses like shootings and homicides.

Over the past five years, we have confronted unprecedented challenges and enormous obstacles in this city, including continuous change, as evidenced by three mayoral administrations and five police commissioners in the past four years, alone. And, frankly, we have not received enough support, financial or otherwise, from the Governor's Mansion. This is not about finger pointing, because I am thrilled to have your attention and your commitment so that we all can now roll up our sleeves and work together.

In that spirit of cooperation, I want to offer a few suggestions for how we can tackle gun violence together, and in particular how state level support could be the most helpful. I know from talking to people who live and work here in Baltimore, that these are the solutions that people, who twice voted me into office to help make this city safer, stronger, and more just - want and deserve.

1. Collaborate to solve more homicide cases and increase homicide clearance rate.

In 2018, the homicide clearance rate in Baltimore City was 26 percent. In other words, BPD solved only 1 out 4 homicide cases leaving most murders unsolved and most grieving families without closure or justice for their lost loved one. Nothing is softer on crime than not identifying and holding accountable a person who commits murder; and yet, in Baltimore City, that's what happens in most cases. For that reason, I propose that we immediately assign detectives/investigators from the Maryland State Police's Criminal Investigative Division (MDCD) to BPD's Homicide Division to immediately impact clearance rates. Experienced homicide detectives from MDCD or from others cities - on loan - to assist in investigating and developing evidence for the successful clearance and prosecution of murder cases should be your top priority.

2. Collaborate to remove guns from our streets. Help facilitate a partnership with ATF, FBI so that we can identify how guns are reaching the streets of Baltimore. Use the MSP to immediately initiate an interception and intervention process. We can work together to figure out where the guns are coming from to remove them from our streets and to stop the incessant violence.

3. Interrupt cycles of gun violence. Stopping gun violence requires us to confront directly the circumstances that cause it to erupt and spread. WE must fully fund community-based violence interruption programs such as the CURE violence model, and community-based trauma centers that help



survivors to heal and stop cycles of gun violence. For your reference, researchers from Johns Hopkins studied the implementation of Cure Violence in Baltimore and found it to be very effective at reducing gun violence. The issue is simply whether Maryland has the political will to fully fund and expand the model so that we can prevent more shootings before they occur.

- 4. Collaborate to stop rampant violence funneled between state prisons and the streets of Baltimore.** Let us pool our information resources to immediately gather intelligence and initiate long-term investigations inside of state prison facilities to reduce the crime prevalent in jails that contributes to the violence on the streets of Baltimore. We all know that violence is still controlled by those housed in state facilities – let's work together to solve the root cause. Just yesterday, a former prison exterminator plead guilty to racketeering as he and two others admitted they were part of a drug smuggling ring where once again, corrections officers, inmates and prison employees smuggled various drugs into a Jessup prison.
- 5. Collaborate to fix broken juvenile system.** There needs to be a thorough review and overhaul of the Department of Juvenile Services. Too many of those in our criminal justice system entered it as children. We all know about the growing school to prison pipeline, but too often it is also a school to graveyard pipeline. Our children are not given the support they need to succeed, and too often the juvenile justice system makes life outcomes worse instead of better. We need to institute policies, and we need resources, that interrupt this cycle. Let's work together to replace the school to prison pipeline with a cradle to college pipeline. That will make Baltimore safer, and give a promising future to all of the children in this city.

My prosecutors are doing their job. As public servants sworn to uphold and protect the public, I agree and share the responsibility to be accountable and that starts with removing self-serving silos and idle finger-pointing. Citizens want – and deserve – real solutions best achieved by working together to remove serious crime from our city and state. And they want both safer and healthier communities – and that includes using our policing and prosecutorial resources wisely and where we can best promote the well-being of our community.

Let's talk real solutions for our city and our state.

Respectfully,

Marilyn J. Mosby
State's Attorney for Baltimore City